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THE PRESIDENT GENERAL

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Brothers of the American-Irish Historical Society:

Honored far beyond expectation and desert in your recent choice of President-General of this Society, it surely is becoming in me to give here first place to some recollections of a departed brother, our first President-General, whose name will ever remain conspicuous on the roll of fame and of his country's glory.

ADMIRAL MEADE, OUR FIRST PRESIDENT-GENERAL.

"Memory, gray old warder, throw open thy portals in welcome
Wide to the dead—our dead—he loved us well in his life-time."

In pleasant remembrance we recall a few of the incidents in the career of Richard W. Meade, as they stand recorded in the Naval archives of the great Republic which he served so faithfully and well.

Born in the City of New York, October 9, 1837, he was appointed midshipman from California, in his 13th year. In July, 1853, a lad of 16, he was present at the "Kosta Affair," in the harbor of Smyrna, and shortly before attaining his majority he was commissioned lieutenant, January 23, 1858. After the breaking out of the civil war he was employed, in coöperation with Gen. W. T. Sherman, in breaking up the guerrilla bands along the Mississippi River, being in command of a steam gunboat. Afterwards he was stationed on Stono River, South Carolina, on picket duty; was there attacked by Gen. Del Kamper with sixteen pieces of artillery and a strong supporting force, the object being to capture or sink Lieut. Meade's gunboat, the "Marblehead," whose crew consisted of only seventy men. After a sharp fight of over an hour—the gunboats "Pawnee" and "Williams" coming to the aid of the "Marblehead"—the enemy was routed and driven from his works with the loss of two 8-inch guns and many men. The "Marblehead," although struck in the hull thirty times, had only three of her crew killed and six wounded. Under Lieut. Meade's

leadership a force was landed that brought away the two guns and destroyed the batteries. "For this service," said Capt. Balch, "I desire to bear my testimony to the skill and bravery of Lieut.-Commander Meade, who, under a sharp fire, worked his guns with great rapidity and handled his vessel admirably." He was also officially thanked in general orders by Rear Admiral Dahlgren, who directed the order to be read on every quarter-deck in the fleet; and he was recommended by the Admiral for promotion "for gallant conduct in the face of the enemy." From May 3, 1864, to July 7, 1865, he commanded the steamer "Chocorua" of the West Gulf Blockading Squadron, under Admiral Farragut. January 22, 1865, at Calcasieu Lake, La., in the face of a greatly superior force, he cut out and destroyed the blockade-runner "Delphina," for which service he was officially thanked by Commodore J. S. Palmer, commanding the squadron in Admiral Farragut's absence. From October 24, 1868, to May 5, 1869, he commanded the steamer "Saginaw," Pacific Squadron, and was stationed at Alaska, occupied in surveying and in keeping quiet the refractory Indians. During the summer of 1870 he commanded the schooner-yacht "America" for experimental purposes, and sailed in the race of August 8, in New York harbor, distancing the English yacht "Cambria" nearly four miles, and coming in as "Number Four," out of over twenty yachts entered in that celebrated contest. From February 15, 1871, to April 22, 1873, he commanded the steamer "Naragansett," Pacific Station, and was specially commended by the Secretary of the Navy in his report to the President, for "great judgment and skill in negotiating a commercial treaty in the Samoan or Navigator Islands," and with his ship he passed 431 days under way and actively cruising, sailing almost entirely under canvas, about 60,000 miles. During this time he visited almost every quarter of the Pacific Ocean, extending his cruise to Australia; surveyed many harbors and inlets; made treaties with tribes of the Polynesian Islands, and compelled the payment of indemnities for outrages inflicted upon American citizens by the natives, all unattended by a single death and without casualty of any sort. This cruise was so unusual as to attract public attention and call forth comments of a very complimentary character from many high and authoritative sources. In an official letter from the Secretary of the Navy to

Commander Meade, dated May 2, 1873, the Admiral of the Navy is quoted as saying that the report of the "Naragansett" cruise was "the best ever sent in, and that through her was more work done than through any other ship afloat for the past two years," with other emphatic and complimentary language.

From September 15, 1890, to May 16, 1893, our brother was a member of the Government Board of Management and Control of the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago, representing the Navy Department. He designed the model battleship "Illinois" as the Navy Department exhibit, and carried out his ideas to a completely successful result. But in April, 1893, he was taken ill at Chicago and was obliged to cease all work, leave of absence being given him until the 27th of September following.

In the meantime, Capt. Meade had been the author of a work on "Boat Exercise," of a compilation on "Naval Construction," had translated from the French several professional pamphlets and contributed numerous articles, on various subjects, to the leading magazines and journals.

Nearing now the end of his official record, which I have greatly condensed, we find him, August 4, 1894, acting Rear-Admiral, commanding the North Atlantic Squadron (Flagship "New York"), and becoming Admiral by commission September 7, 1894, and continuing in active service until May 20, 1895, when, at his own request, he was placed on the list of retired officers as entitled thereto by law, having been in the service of his country for forty-five years. But brief was his earthly rest after those long, busy and eventful years, for on May 4, of the present year, from the beautiful Capital by the broad flowing river, he passed over to the silent and countless majority.

That in the veins of such a man as this flowed the blood, a strain of which warms every heart of Celtic inheritance, is something of which we, of the same descent, may all be glad and proud.

THE INFLUENCES OF THE CELT.

An eminent divine has compared the influences of the Celtic race upon the nations to the influence of the mighty Gulf Stream of the Atlantic Ocean, which

"In its sublime circuit washes the shores of continents; visits remotest islands;

wanders through every clime; cools the expanses of equatorial seas; melts the proud iceberg in its adventurous career; carries on its bosom the navies of every nation; swallows up in its vortex the mightiest rivers that flow from the lands; awakens the wildest tempests throughout its measureless course; sends verdure and wealth to the isles and coasts of Western Europe, and breathes those blessed gales by which we, in America, are refreshed in the torrid days of summer. From its first perceptible movements at the Equator until it disappears amid the ice of Nova Zembla, nothing can turn it from its course. It is whirled under blazing tropic suns; it is lashed into storms by vast icebergs, and congealed by the seas of the frozen North; still, on, and on, it goes to its destiny.

"Thus it is also with the Celtic race of men. In ages before the advent of our Lord, a branch of the Gallic or Celtic race, 'as it went plundering through the world,' from the wild interior of Asia, reached Great Britain and there settled as the Celts of Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

"For four hundred and twenty years, or as long as the Roman power governed them, the people, thus early planted, flourished in the British Isles. The Celtic tribes in each of these, were those who were Christianized. At that time a new impulse was given to the current of their history by St. Patrick, who, about 430, made Ireland the field of his labors in the cause of Christ; and by St. Columba, an Irishman of the royal lineage of Ulster, who, about 550, probably did more to elevate the race than any other man. He selected the sacred isle of Iona or Columkill, amid the tempest-lashed islands of the northwest of Scotland, and, taking its old Druidic college, established in it that celebrated school, institution, or monastery, which for centuries was the great source of light to northern Europe by sending forth missionaries well trained for their work. Then in Ireland we find them. . . . There they rested for awhile. There they received the deep impress of that training through which they were prepared for their last and grandest mission in working out the Constitution of this country, destined in the glories of Providence to take a leading part in the final movements of the human race. . . . From there, as the Gulf Stream spreads over the Atlantic and over the northern regions of the globe, were they to spread out and influence the action of men."

Nowhere else have I seen so well set forth the indomitable endurance and distinctive characteristics of the Celtic race, which, from long before the dawn of history, like a veritable Gulf Stream, maintained its individuality in the tide of time.

According to the best authority in this matter, the first race of men to occupy the British Isles is unknown; but their inhabitants, as known to the Greeks or Romans before the Christian era, were of the Aryan stock, supposed to come from Central Asia, called sometimes Celts or Kelts, and sometimes Gauls or Gaels. Of this great race—turbulent, roving, war-like—certain tribes entered northern Italy, and for generations harassed and defied the Roman

power until subdued by the conquering legions of Cæsar. Others appear in Macedonia, Thrace, and Greece, as early as, or even before 278 B. C.; others, again, about the same time in Asia-Minor, possessing a province thereof, and giving to it their ethnic name, Latinized, "Galatia," where, after three centuries, the Gospel was preached to them by St. Paul, probably in their own Celtic dialect, as it was still spoken by the common people, and as the missionaries of the Apostolic period had the "gift of tongue." Still others in Spain are found, known to history as Celt-Iberians, who, for a long time, made head against the armies of both Carthage and Rome; and yet other and other tribes and clans of this imperishable and immortal race, ever following the sun in its course, had centuries before appeared in the Western Isles, preserving to this day their best characteristics.

Out of these characteristics—vitality, energy, aggressive force, conflicts were certain to arise—not only with other races, as in Gaul, but often in the British Isles between different clans, chieftains, and religious and other partisans of their own race. And, in turn, out of these ever varying and shifting conflicts, and these elemental characteristics, came the four provinces or kingdoms of Ireland; and the Scottish invasions of Ulster, in the days of Bruce, and the plantation by James I (himself a Celt), with their mingling of clans, which introduced no new race, as the invaders were merely returning to their fatherland.

Naturally and inevitably, out of a profound sense of spiritual things, came with Christianity to the Irish Celts the missionary and proselytizing spirit, which long centuries thereafter involved them in creed conflicts, while their British kinsmen mostly adopted the doctrine of the Protestant Reformation; the greater part of the inhabitants of the Green Isle held fast to and suffered as no other people ever suffered for the ancient faith first brought to them by the great patron Saint of Ireland, St. Patrick, a Celt. By a touch of genius he idealized, transfigured the modest shamrock at his feet into a symbol of nationality, as well as an emblem of the divine Trinity—making the trefoil an object-lesson to his simple followers, who might there behold a physical manifestation of the mysterious truth of "three in one and one in three." Alas, that it did not also become the emblem of a fraternal union of the Celtic people of the three British Isles.

A half century from the death of St. Patrick, or in the year 521, in the County of Donegal, was born of royal lineage, St. Columba, or Columkille, a hero of the Christian faith, only second to the great Patron Saint in fame and true glory. Columkille, name forever associated with that band of Cultores Dei, worshippers of God, with that institution of learning, which down into the seventeenth century continued to send forth its devoted Christian scholars to instruct and to enlighten the world, with Iona's sacred isle, whose name is even now, as then, a far-off and tender reminiscence of an early home of the Christianized Celto-Gallic race.

And here, I say, that I am not dealing with any statement that "Culdeeism was the germ or origin of Presbyterianism," or that St. Patrick derived all his authority from the Roman Catholic Church. I am here to speak only in reverent affection of that branch of race lineage in which we all claim a part—of that strong race-current which has pushed and cut its way through the common ocean of humanity; maintaining to a wondrous degree its individuality, when at its best, sympathetic and beneficent in all its course; which has appeared, in certain of its devious wanderings and winding eddies and branches, both under the name of Ancient Britains and sub-names of Englishmen, Irishmen, Scotchmen, and Welchmen, whose rival creeds, religious sects, and theologic dogmas ought to find no place in any discussion upon such an occasion as this.

We all, whether Irish or Scotch, English or Welch, Celts of Ancient British stock, are of a grand race, in which, largely mingled as it is with Germanic strain, we avow a just pride.

A vast amount of prejudice has existed in this country against the Irish people who have come to our shores as immigrants. It existed generations back and to some extent affects their descendants who bear distinctively Irish names—"the Macs and the O's"—as the saying is. Now, one of the objects of our Society is, or should be, to show that this prejudice has no foundation to stand on. It is based on the theory that the English people and the Irish people are of entirely distinct races, the former mainly "Anglo-Saxon," the latter Celtic. Now, nothing is better established ethnologically than that the two people are of precisely the same original stock—Ancient Britains—with practically the same mingling of bloods introduced by subsequent invading tribes,

mainly Germanic. First came the Romans, whose legions were mostly recruited in Gaul, and these were Celts or Germans; then came the Northmen—Goths; Danes—also Goths; the Angles, and Saxons, etc. (Germans), and lastly the Normans, who were a mixture of the Teutonic and Celtic.

These additions to the ancient British people merged into that stock; and the proportion of the British type is about the same to-day in the Eastern part of England—the so-called Anglo-Saxon section—that it is in the Eastern half of Ireland. There is to-day, in proportion to the population, as much so-called “Anglo-Saxon” blood in the people in the Eastern half of Ireland as there is in the people of the Eastern part of England. In the Western half of England there is as much old British—*i. e.*, Celtic—blood in the people as there is in the most Celtic part of Ireland. The test of the proportion of the Celtic or Germanic blood in both countries is the color of the hair and eyes. The Celts were dark-haired and blue-eyed; the Germans, fair-haired or red-haired and blue-eyed.

It has been estimated by scientific tests that about 70 per cent. of the English people are of the dark-haired type, and there is no greater percentage of this type in any part of Ireland. In this country the fair-haired type is not so great, not even in the oldest settlements of New England; hence, when we give all the credit of English and American civilization and progress to the alleged Anglo-Saxon race, we merely assert what is grossly untrue and unjust to ourselves and our Celtic ancestors. The “Anglo-Saxons” got their civilization from the Celtic Britons, who were civilized by the Romans first, and who derived all their knowledge of law, literature, art, science, etc., from the people of Gaul and Rome. When the Anglo-Saxons came to England they were barbarians, and that they did not exterminate the British people nor drive them into Wales is abundantly proven by the type and complexion of the English people of the present day.

As in the classic age of Greece, the beauties and sublimities of natural scenery in a favored clime, inspired and stirred a virile race until it broke forth in strains of epic narrative and sweetest song; and as it is more than a fancy that the sea waves’ rhythmic roll and plash upon the shore must have suggested the bound and cadence of the Homeric verse, so the caustic wit and humor of Swift, the

dramatic genius of Shakespeare, the glowing imagination of Goldsmith, the immortal poesy of Burns, and Tom Moore's divine melodies are but the reflex of outward scenes and experience—environments acting upon peculiar Celtic temperament, aptitude or genius.

CELTIC INFLUENCE ON AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS AND NATIONALITY.

But I must come to my more immediate theme: the influence of the American Celt in moulding our own institutions and nationality. The Celtic element of our population, while it may justly claim honors from those members of the race who, at Mecklenburg, North Carolina, made that original Declaration of Independence, which contains much of the identical phraseology afterwards used by Mr. Jefferson, and from those of their ancestors sitting in the Parliament of Ireland, to whom that memorable letter explanatory of the Declaration of Independence was addressed by John Hancock,* and signed by him as President of the American Congress—our Celtic element need not rely upon such incidents in our history, illustrious and inspiring as they are, and in which every Celt takes a just pride as being manifestations of the unquenchable spirit of his blood; for in the development of our independence and progress, from the first settlement of the colonies to the present day, the palm must be awarded to the Celts, without distinction of provinces or creed, as their influence in making our civilization what it is predominates over that of any other portion of the human race in the make-up of the American people. This fact has been well demonstrated by my learned friend, Mr. J. D. O'Connell, of the U. S. Bureau of Statistics, Treasury Department, the Vice-President of this Society for the District of Columbia, in his well-known letter, replying to President Eliot's Atlantic Monthly article on "Five American Contributions to Civilization."

Indeed, before the birth of the Union, while there were but twelve colonies at the time, their delegates united in that appeal of John Hancock's, to which I have just referred, addressed to the people of Ireland for sympathy and for help. It is said that at that time the more sanguine on both sides indulged in the fond dream—as among

* See Appendix.

the possibilities of the great struggle—of securing to the Green Isle, not only the freedom for which she has so long yearned, but a place in the confederation, which would have given her a star in the blue field of our country's banner.

How Ireland responded to that appeal, the speeches of Edmund Burke and Richard Brinsley Sheridan in the British Parliament, representing, as they did, the sentiment of the people of Ireland in sympathy with our revolutionary struggle, will attest.

Our immortal Declaration of Independence was signed by fifty-six names, of which eight, in addition to that of Charles Thompson, of Pennsylvania, a County Derry man, who was the Secretary of the Continental Congress, belonged to Irishmen or the sons of Irishmen. These were Matthew Thornton, of New Hampshire; James Smith, George Taylor, and Thomas McKean, of Pennsylvania; George Reade, of Delaware; Charles Carroll, of Carrollton; Thomas Lynch and Edward Rutledge, of South Carolina. But Irishmen contributed something besides their courage and talents to the cause of the Revolution. In 1780, when the finances of the Army were at the lowest ebb, when the hardships of the soldiers for want of food and clothing had reached a point where mutiny reared its head, seventy-six merchants of Philadelphia subscribed an enormous sum for the relief of the soldiers. Of the subscribers, twenty were Irish, and the amounts appearing opposite their names aggregated \$442,500—in those days an enormous sum.

As I have already said, I utterly discard and scout all discussion and estimate of the relative meed of praise due in the Revolutionary struggle, and since, to those different branches of the Celtic race which took part in our cause, and to the diverse religious sects or creeds of their soldiers and statesmen, scholars, philosophers, teachers and missionaries, settlers in western solitudes, founders of new states, builders of imperial cities from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast, and from the great Northern Lakes to the Southern Gulf. Proud of my Celtic lineage, derived from England, Ireland, and Wales, I no less give honor to all of our race who, on the battle-field or in the Senate, in the church or in the halls of learning, or in humbler walks of life, have faithfully borne their part in the organization and development of free American institutions. And while I remember with gratitude that, in an intolerant age,

under the Catholic Calverts, father and sons, and especially under Cecil Calvert, second Lord Baltimore, all Christian sects in Maryland were free to worship God, each in its own way, nevertheless, I remember with regret that in other colonies, and later on in Maryland itself, people of the same ancient British stock were persecuting to the death their neighbors and friends, all on account of mistaken religious zeal degenerated into bigotry; and I also remember that the main body of the British Army that supported the crown in our Revolutionary war were also of the same British stock as the Celts, who so manfully resisted them. But, thanks be to God, those days of bigotry and intolerance have passed forever, and nothing remains of that kind to remind us of them, except the false and absurd idea that the American people are of the so-called "Anglo-Saxon" race. It is for our Society to demonstrate, on the lines Mr. J. D. O'Connell, of Washington, has so well marked out for us, that there never was such a race, and that we, the American people, are Celto-Germanic, like our British ancestors, with the Celt, now as ever before, largely predominating.

THE BUILDERS OF THE REPUBLIC

The English historian, Plowden, says:

"It is a fact, beyond question, that most of the early successes of the patriots of America were owing to the vigorous exertions and prowess of the Irish emigrants who bore arms in that cause."

Lucky, the historian, declared that:

"Few classes were so largely represented in the American Army as Irish emigrants."

Other authorities might be cited to the same effect. We know that Washington cherished the most profound gratitude for the services of his Irish soldiers. When he joined the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, at Philadelphia, he complimented them as "a society distinguished for the firmest adherence to our cause."

It is an historic fact that during the eleven years of agitation, between the passage of the Stamp Act and the Battle of Lexington, the influence of the Irish settlers in the colonies was fiercely and

unceasingly excited to incite resistance against Great Britain. It was Byron who wrote:

And if we do but watch the hour
 There never yet was human power,
 That could evade, if unforgiven,
 The patient search and vigil long
 Of him who treasures up a wrong.

In every engagement, from Concord to Yorktown, Irish exiles sealed with their blood their love for the Republic and their hatred of the common oppressor. Well might Lord Mountjoy, many years after, in moving for the repeal of the Irish penal code, startle the British Parliament with the bitter exclamation: "You lost America by the Irish."

Not in a vain-glorious spirit do we recall these facts, but to show that the Irish-Americans of to-day, and their sons and daughters, have a stake, even beyond their common citizenship, in the greatness and glory of the Republic. In the foundation of our noble political fabric, the children of Erin played a heroic and invaluable part. The blood that was shed during the seven years of the Revolutionary war was the seed of the American Constitution, and Irishmen helped to provide the sacrifice. Among them we may well name the Carrolls, the Rutledges, the Sullivans, the Montgomeries, the Fitzsimmons, and Barrys, the Henrys, the O'Briens, Thompsons, and McKears, the Waynes, Caldwells, Moylans, Cadwaladers, Dickensons, Morris', Nixons, Dunlaps of the Revolution. Whence came Andrew Jackson, Addis Emmet, Calhoun, and McDuffie of a later day? Whence Thomas Clinton, the projector of the Erie Canal, the inventor of the first steamboat, and the builder of the first American railway? Whence our sculptors, St. Gaudens, Milmore, Powers, and Crawford? Whence our most distinguished political economists, Carey and Baird? Whence the hero of Winchester? They were all Irish by birth or extraction. And may I not ask, who can doubt the paternity of our distinguished President, one of whose name, William McKinley, of Dervock county, Antrim, was the close friend of the Irish patriot, Henry Joy McCracken, the leader of the Ulster rebels? And whence Fuller and Harlan and Brewer and White and McKenna, of our present Supreme Court of the United States?

And note, also, our indebtedness to another branch of the old Celtic stock—the Welsh. Of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, eighteen had Welsh blood in their veins. But why need I continue the enumeration of the distinguished men who are bone of our bone and sinew of our sinew?

But while this knowledge and recollection stir an honest pride, it should also stimulate our sense of patriotic duty. It is for us to do what we can to preserve and perpetuate the heritage of American freedom for which the patriots of the Revolution suffered and died, to give our fondest devotion to the Republic, to guard its institutions with jealous care, to work for the highest political ideals, with an eye single to the best interests of our beloved country.

Indeed, Celtic influence in America is all too vast and varied for adequate treatment in any occasional address. Beyond the merest enumeration, what can be said of that influence flashing everywhere like threads of light throughout all the web and fabric of American history? Of that influence in war and peace, in art and science and letters, at the bar, on the bench, and in legislative halls, and through the myriad quiet ways of private and domestic life—who, in a brief hour, shall give voice to words worthy of the majestic theme? Thus, out from the twilight of time and poured over all the world, has the grand Celtic race stream swept its way, until here the enlarged vortex of its compulsive course has warmed and vitalized the whole American people.

“We are but as the instruments of Heaven,
Our work is not design, but destiny.”

APPENDIX.

An address of the Twelve United Colonies of North America, by their Representatives in Congress, to the People of Ireland:

To the People of Ireland:

From the delegates appointed by the United Colonies of New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, The Lower Counties on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, in General Congress, at Philadelphia, the 10th of ay, 1775.

Friends and Fellow-Subjects:

As the important contest into which we have been driven is now become interesting to every European state, and particularly affects the members of the British Empire, we think it our duty to address you on the subject. We are desirous, as is natural to injured innocence, of possessing the good opinion of the virtuous and humane. We are particularly desirous of furnishing you with a true statement of our motives and objects; the better to enable you to judge of our conduct with accuracy and determine the merits of the controversy with impartiality and precision. However incredible it may appear, that, at this enlightened period, the leaders of the nation, which in every age has sacrificed hecatombs of her bravest patriots on the altar of liberty, should presume gravely to assert and, by force of arms, attempt to establish an arbitrary sway over the lives, liberties, and property of their fellow-subjects in America; it is, nevertheless, a most deplorable and indisputable truth.

These colonies have, from the time of their first settlement, for near two centuries, peaceably enjoyed those very rights of which the ministry have for ten years past endeavored by fraud and by violence to deprive them. At the conclusion of the last war the genius of England and the spirit of wisdom, as if offended at the ungrateful treatment of their sons, withdrew from the British counsels and left that nation a prey to a race of ministers, with whom ancient English honesty and benevolence disdained to dwell. From that period, jealousy, discontent, oppression, and discord have raged among all His Majesty's subjects, and filled every part of his dominions with distress and complaint.

Not content with our purchasing of Britain, at her own price, clothing and a thousand other articles used by near three millions of people on this vast continent; not satisfied with the amazing profits arising from the monopoly of our trade, without giving us either time to breathe after a long, though glorious, war, or the least credit for the blood and treasure we have expended in it; notwithstanding the zeal we had manifested for the service of our sovereign, and

the warmest attachment to the constitution of Britain and the people of England, a black and horrid design was formed, to convert us from freemen into slaves, from subjects into vassals, and from friends into enemies.

Taxes, for the first time since we landed on the American shores, were, without our consent, imposed upon us; an unconstitutional edict to compel us to furnish necessaries for a standing army, that we wished to see disbanded, was issued, and the Legislature of New York suspended for refusing to comply with it. Our ancient and inestimable right of trial by jury was, in many instances, abolished, and the common law of the land made to give place to admiralty jurisdictions. Judges were rendered, by the tenure of their commissions, entirely dependent on the will of the Minister. New crimes were arbitrarily created, and new courts, unknown to the constitution, instituted. Wicked and insidious Governors have been set over us; and dutiful petitions for the removal of even the notoriously infamous Governor Hutchinson were branded with the opprobrious appellation of scandalous and defamatory. Hardy attempts have been made, under color of Parliamentary authority, to seize Americans, and carry them to Great Britain to be tried for offenses committed in the Colonies. Ancient charters have no longer remained sacred—that of the Massachusetts Bay was violated; and their form of government essentially mutilated and transformed; on pretense of punishing a violation of some private property committed by a few disguised individuals, the populous and flourishing town of Boston was surrounded by fleets and armies; its trade destroyed, its ports blocked up, and thirty thousand citizens subjected to all the miseries attending so sudden a convulsion in their commercial metropolis; and to remove every obstacle to the rigorous execution of this system of oppression, an act of Parliament was passed, evidently calculated to indemnify those who might, in the prosecution of it, even embroe their hands in the blood of the inhabitants.

Though pressed by such an accumulation of undeserved injuries, America still remembered her duty to her Sovereign. A Congress, consisting of Deputies from Twelve United Colonies, assembled. They, in the most respectful terms, laid their grievances at the foot of the throne, and implored His Majesty's interposition in their behalf. They also agreed to suspend all trade with Great Britain, Ireland, and the West Indies; hoping by this peaceable mode of opposition to obtain that justice from the British Ministry which had been so long solicited in vain. And here permit us to assure you that it was with the utmost reluctance we could prevail upon ourselves to cease our commercial connections with your island. *Your* Parliament had done us no wrong. *You* had ever been friendly to the rights of mankind; and we acknowledge, with pleasure and with gratitude, that *your* nation has produced patriots, who have nobly distinguished themselves in the cause of humanity and America. On the other hand, we were not ignorant that the labor and manufactures of Ireland, like those of the silk-worm, were of little moment to herself; but served only to give luxury to those who *neither toil nor spin*. We perceived that if we continued our commerce with you, our agreement not to import from Britain would be fruitless, and were, therefore, compelled to adopt a measure to which nothing but absolute necessity could have reconciled us. It gave us, however, some consolation to

reflect that, should it occasion much distress, the fertile regions of America would afford you a safe asylum from poverty, and, in time, from oppression also—an asylum in which many thousands of your countrymen have found hospitality, peace, and affluence, and become united to us by all the ties of consanguinity, mutual interest, and affection. Nor did the Congress stop here. Flattered by a pleasing expectation that the justice and humanity which had so long characterized the English nation would, on proper application, afford us relief, they represented their grievances in an affectionate address to their brethren in Britain, and entreated their aid and interposition in behalf of these Colonies.

The more fully to evince their respect for their Sovereign, the unhappy people of Boston were requested by the Congress to submit with patience to their fate, and all America united in a resolution to abstain from every species of violence. During this period that devoted town suffered unspeakably. Its inhabitants were insulted and their property violated. Still relying on the clemency and justice of His Majesty and the nation, they permitted a few regiments to take possession of their town; to surround it with fortifications, and to cut off all intercourse between them and their friends in the country.

With anxious expectation did all America wait the event of their petition; all America laments its fate. Their Prince was deaf to their complaints. And vain were all attempts to impress him with a sense of the sufferings of his American subjects; of the cruelty of their *Tusk-Musters*, and of the *many plagues* which impended over his dominions. Instead of directions for a candid inquiry into our grievances, insult was added to oppression, and our long forbearance rewarded with the imputation of cowardice. Our trade with foreign states was prohibited, and an act of Parliament passed to prevent our even fishing on our own coasts. Our peaceable assemblies, for the purpose of consulting the common safety, were declared seditious; and our asserting the very rights which placed the Crown of Great Britain on the heads of the three successive Princes of the House of Hanover, styled rebellion. Orders were given to reinforce the troops in America. The wild and barbarous savages of the wilderness have been solicited by gifts to take up the hatchet against us, and instigated to deluge our settlements with the blood of innocent and defenseless women and children. The whole country was, moreover, alarmed with the expected horrors of domestic insurrection. Refinements in parental cruelty, at which the genius of Britain must blush! Refinements which admit not of being even recited without horror, or practiced without infamy! We should be happy were these dark machinations the mere suggestion of suspicion. We are sorry to declare that we are possessed of the most authentic and indubitable credence of their reality.

The Ministry, bent on pulling down the pillars of the constitution, endeavored to erect the standard of despotism in America; and if successful, Britain and Ireland may shudder at the consequences. Three of their most experienced generals are sent to wage war with their fellow-subjects; and America is amazed to find the name of Howe in the catalogue of her enemies. She loved his brother. Despairing of driving the colonies to resistance by any other means than actual hostility, a detachment of the army at Boston marched into the

country in all the array of war, and, unprovoked, fired upon and killed several of the inhabitants. The neighboring farmers suddenly assembled and repelled the attack. From this, all communication between the town and country was intercepted. The citizens petitioned the general for permission to leave the town, and he promised, on surrendering their arms, to permit them to depart with their other effects. They, accordingly, surrendered their arms, and the general violated his faith. Under various pretenses, passports were delayed and denied, and many thousands of the inhabitants are at this day confined in the town in the utmost wretchedness and want. The lame, blind, and the sick have indeed been turned out into the neighboring fields; and some, eluding the vigilance of the sentries, have escaped from the town by swimming to the adjacent shores.

The war having thus begun on the part of General Gage's troops, the country armed and embodied. The reinforcements from Ireland soon after arrived; a vigorous attack was then made upon the provincials. In their march, the troops surrounded the town of Charlestown, consisting of about four hundred houses, then recently abandoned to escape the fury of the relentless soldiery. Having plundered the houses, they set fire to the town and reduced it to ashes. To this wanton waste of property, unknown to civilized nations, they were prompted, the better to conceal their approach under cover of the smoke. A shocking mixture of cowardice and cruelty, which then first tarnished the lustre of the British arms, when aimed at a brother's breast! But, blessed be God, they were restrained from committing further ravages by the loss of a very considerable part of their army, including many of their most experienced officers. The loss of the inhabitants was inconsiderable.

Compelled, therefore, to behold thousands of our countrymen imprisoned, and men, women, and children involved in promiscuous and unmerited misery; when we find all faith at an end, and sacred treaties turned into tricks of State; when we perceive our friends and kinsmen massacred, our habitations plundered, our houses in flames, and their once happy inhabitants fed only by the hand of charity, who can blame us for endeavoring to restrain the progress of desolation? Who can censure our repelling the attack of such a barbarous band? Who, in such circumstances, would not obey the great, the universal, the divine law of self-preservation?

Though villified as wanting spirit, we are determined to behave like men. Though insulted and abused, we wish for reconciliation. Though defamed as seditious, we are ready to obey the laws. And though charged with rebellion, will cheerfully bleed in defense of our Sovereign in a righteous cause. What more can we say? What more can we offer?

But we forbear to trouble you with a tedious detail of the various and fruitless offers and applications we have repeatedly made, not for pensions, for wealth, or for honors, but for the humble boon of being permitted to possess the fruits of honest industry, and to enjoy that degree of Liberty to which God and the Constitution have given us an undoubted right.

Blessed with an indissoluble union, with a variety of internal resources, and with a firm reliance on the justice of the supreme disposal of all human events,

we have no doubt of rising superior to all the machinations of evil and abandoned Ministers. We already anticipate the golden period when liberty, with all the gentle arts of peace and humanity, shall establish her mild dominion in this western world, and erect eternal monuments to the memory of those virtuous patriots and martyrs who shall have fought and bled and suffered in her cause.

Accept our most grateful acknowledgments for the friendly disposition you have always shown toward us. We know that *you* are not without your grievances. We sympathize with you in your distress, and are pleased to find that the design of subjugating us has persuaded administration to dispense to Ireland some vagrant rays of ministerial sunshine; even the tender mercies of government have long been cruel toward *you*. In the rich pastures of Ireland many hungry parricides have fed and grown strong to labor in its destruction. We hope the patient abiding of the meek may not always be forgotten; and God grant that the iniquitous schemes of extirpating liberty from the British Empire may be soon defeated. But we should be wanting to ourselves; we should be perfidious to posterity; we should be unworthy of that ancestry from which we derive our descent, should we submit with folded arms to military butchery and depredation to gratify the lordly ambition or face the avarice of the British Ministry. In defense of our persons and property, under actual violation, we have taken up arms. When that violence shall be removed, and hostilities cease on the part of the aggressors, they shall cease on our part also. For the achievement of this happy event, we confide in the good offices of our fellow-subjects beyond the Atlantic. Of their friendly disposition we do not yet despond. aware, as they must be, that they have nothing more to expect from the same common enemy than the humble favor of being last devoured.

By order of the Congress,

JOHN HANCOCK, *President*.

Philadelphia, July 28, 1775.

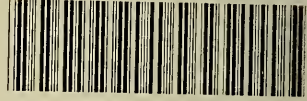
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